



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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# **Nine Northern Virginia Chambers of Commerce Announce Their Support for the 495 Northern Extension Project**

*Traffic along the 495 corridor is a regional issue that requires a regional response*

**Tysons, VA** – Nine Chambers of Commerce in Northern Virginia, including the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce, Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce, Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce, and the Prince William Chamber of Commerce enthusiastically support the proposal to extend the 495 Express Lanes from the Dulles Toll Road interchange to the George Washington Memorial Parkway, known as 495 NEXT. Improving travel conditions near Tysons and between Virginia and Maryland is a regional issue that affects thousands of businesses and employees in Northern Virginia. Expanding the I-495 Express Lanes will reduce one of the region’s biggest choke points, kickstart long-term environmental benefits, and improve roadway safety for drivers while offering increased reliability and additional travel options for commuters.

“In order to maintain our position as a top business destination we must continue to invest in developing a 21st century transportation network aimed at improving our mobility,” said Julie Coons, president and CEO of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. “The I-495 expansion will bring a much-needed economic boost to the area and provide long-term economic benefits. It will also add new transit choices that will help attract more businesses and help existing businesses flourish.”

The Northern Virginia economy is still on the rebound after a difficult 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 495 NEXT project is fully funded by the private sector and will create an estimated 6,300 new jobs and generate approximately \$880 million in economic activity during the project development and construction. Long-term, the project will create economic opportunities by improving travel choices between the major economic hubs in Northern Virginia represented by these Chambers of Commerce. The project will increase mobility on I-495; provide expanded transit service between Fairfax County and Maryland, including bus lines and bike and pedestrian paths; and set the stage for expansion and improvements on the American Legion Bridge.

Collectively these chambers of commerce represent businesses that employ more than 600,000 people across the region, businesses that use I-495 to move goods and provide ser-



vices and whose employees use I-495 for their daily commute, to run errands, and visit family and friends.

“495 NEXT is critical to the future of Tysons, helping connect the vibrant economy of Tysons to vital economic hubs in Maryland and Arlington, said Andrew Clark, President and Chairman of the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce, the expanded transit service will help Tysons reach its long-term goals to reduce congestion and increase accessibility for Tyson’s residents, businesses, employees, and consumers, improving our quality of life and economic outlook.”

495 NEXT sets the stage for improvements to the American Legion Bridge, which sees over 230,000 trips per day and is consistently backed up for multiple hours each day. Improved infrastructure and flow of traffic through this bottleneck will relieve thousands of drivers and improve their quality of life.

“For years, neighborhoods in McLean have been inundated by cut-through regional commuters seeking to avoid the endemic Beltway backups approaching the American Legion Bridge,” said Paul Kohlenberger, President of the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce, “495NEXT will alleviate this cut-through traffic, increase travel time reliability, and offer additional travel choices to the residents, customers and workers of the Greater McLean area.”

“Fairfax County and Northern Virginia are on a strong growth trajectory,” added Julie Coon from Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. “495 NEXT is a critical next step for our transportation infrastructure to keep pace with this growth and move more people, improve safety and improve the quality of life for residents.”

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### **About the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce**

Originally founded in 1925 as a Fairfax county-focused business advocacy organization, the Northern Virginia Chamber has grown into region's largest Chamber of Commerce, drawing members and impacting policy across the Greater Washington D.C. Metropolitan Region. Today, 700 members strong, representing close to 500,000 employees, the diversity of our community is one of our greatest assets, offering opportunities to learn from one another and form personal connections that help guide lasting business growth.

NOVA's goal is to be considered not only a business partner but also an agent of change for our members. We do this through our work in government advocacy, education through events and programs, networking, promotion of member businesses, and recognition through awards. We are proud to have worked together over these many years to build a meaningful association that enriches our community and look forward to continuing that good work.

For more information, visit [www.novachamber.org](http://www.novachamber.org).